The Judiciary and the Executive

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(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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THE 85TH CHARKHA JAYANTI

(Eighty days' spinning programme from 17-7-'53 to 4-10-'53)

The 12th day of the dark-half of Bhadrapad, which is Gandhiji's birth-day according to the Hindu Calendar, is observed as Charkha Jayanti. In Gujarat it is known as *Rentia Baras*. The 80 days' annual Jayanti Spinning programme this year will begin at 7-30 a.m. on 17-7-'53 after the morning prayers.

This programme originated from this place twenty years ago. Gandhiji blessed it and encouraged it. It was then adopted by the Charkha Sangh and by other provinces. It has played a great part in promoting Khadi work.

Gandhiji used to send encouraging messages every year on this occasion. He also got some well-known leader to come over here for inaugurating the programme. Some of these relevant messages and sayings are reproduced below:

From Gandhiji's letter in connection with programme observed on his 70th birth-day:

Ch. Narandas,

* * *

If conditions there permit, you may undertake other items of work, such as going to the Harijan part of the town and doing service to our Harijan brethren. But this is to be done only if persons other than those who are engaged in spinning are available. The same group of persons trying to do all the things may spoil all of them. Therefore, you will not do anything which is not supported by your experience. I have made the suggestion only for introducing some variety in your programme. But that is secondary. Our principal aim in observing *Rentia Baras* (i.e. Charkha Jayanti) is to concentrate all our attention on the Charkha during this period.

19-7-'38 Bapu's Blessings

The Charkha Sangh has taken the decision to observe the Jayanti. They propose to collect funds for Khadi, organize spinning, and collect the yarn. In this regard the Charkha Sangh may well follow the example of Narandas Gandhi. He has been observing the occasion for many years past by raising subscriptions and collecting yarn. He is getting increasing success every year. There is no reason why the Charkha Sangh should not get the same degree of success. If the worker is determined in his resolve, the success is bound to come. In the absence of Khadi, the time may come when people will have to go naked. Charkha Sangh is the only organization which can ward off that evil day.

M. K. Gandhi

From Bapuji's letter dated 31-8-'44:

Ch. Narandas,

The Kasturba Smarak Nidhi has collected by now about seventy-five lakhs. It will be used in the way they decide. I do not know how much of it can be spent for your work. Therefore you who are working for raising this fund should let it proceed in its own way. Those who have always been helping you to fill in the Charkha Jayanti Funds have to understand this. And I hope if they understand this they will continue to help you as they have been doing. Where you feel that these contributors need to know my opinion on this question, you are free to use this letter. I should be sorry if the people misunderstand the purpose of the Kasturba Fund and your work suffers on account of it. I will consider this fund to have been fruitfully spent only if activities such as you are carrying on prosper and spread everywhere.

Sevagram, Bapu's Blessings
Wardha (C.P.), 31-8-'44

Gandhiji's message on the occasion of the celebration of his 76th birth-day:

Ch. Narandas,

I have carefully gone through your annual report. I have not yet started writing to anybody, except three letters to friends who are suffering from ill-health. But there is no one in the world who is suffering more than Daridranarayan (the poor). You are one of his devoted servants. You have been observing *Rentia Baras* on the occasion of my birth-day and every year increasingly tightening yourself for more and more service to this deity. It will be a very hard test this year. I wish for your success. I had an opportunity in the jail to read something of Marx and of the events in Russia. There can be no comparison between the huge experiments which they are carrying on in Russia and our comparatively tiny Charkha. There too they have called on the

entire people to play their part in the reconstruction of the country. But there is between their experiment and ours the difference between the East and the West or say, between the North and the South. It is a far cry from our simple and unostentatious Charkha to their giant machines propelled by steam and electricity. And yet, I continue to love my slowly-moving Charkha. The Charkha is the symbol of non-violence. And ultimately non-violence is bound to win. But we who claim to be its worshippers, cannot slacken our efforts, for then we will bring shame not only on ourselves but also on non-violence. Your work is excellent; you should now try to develop it on new lines and make it scientific. Charkha like the machine has its own science. We have not yet perfected its technique. It requires long and thoughtful practice.

Just as knowledge without faith is worthless, even so faith without knowledge is blind.

Juhu, 20-5-'44 Bapu's Blessings

In the course of a discussion with some of the leading workers of U.P., Bapuji said, "I will place before you the programme of organizing spinning on an ever-growing scale.

"I had left off spinning for some days on the advice of the doctors. But I again began it when I heard from Narandas Gandhi (about his efforts for promoting Khadi) and I am not going to leave it now until my hand gets paralyzed."

Ch. Narandas,

I have no thought of my birth-day. I know it only as the Charkha Day. You regard the day as important and observe it not because you are my relative but because you also love Charkha as dearly as I. Your work will surely help propagate Charkha around you. The task is undoubtedly difficult in the present atmosphere of idleness. It may appear even unattractive. But unflinching faith makes easy what appears difficult and makes attractive what appears unattractive. May your faith bring home the power of Charkha to those around you.

Sevagram,
Wardha, 28-9-'36 Bapu's Blessings

Message from Gandhiji on the occasion of his 74th birth-day:

The present times in our country are such when all of us, the rich and the poor, the great and the small, men and women, all without exception must spin. If people do not take to Charkha, it is very likely that the time may come when we may have to go naked.

15-7-'42 Bapu's Blessings

Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta, well-known leader of Saurashtra, has accepted our invitation to inaugurate the anniversary programme. Shri Mehta is the Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Board and his presence in our midst on this occasion will therefore be specially useful to us.

The spinners should resolve to devote their maximum energy and time during this period to spinning and offer their yarn as donation for the service of the poor. The donors should contribute eighty coins to the Daridranarayan Fund which is supporting a number of constructive activities in Saurashrta.

Rashtriya Shala, NARANDAS K. GANDHI
Rajkot, 1-7-'53

(From Gujarati)

MACHINE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

(*By Maganbhai P. Desai*)

A correspondent who is an employee in the Postal Department writes the following from Lucknow:

"Three foreign experts, whose services have been engaged by the Government for the purpose, are at present touring some of our big cities to study the working of our post-offices. They will be making recommendations on the possibilities of mechanization in the various operations of postal work. One cannot understand how it benefits the country to undertake such wasteful ventures when we are faced with many other pressing problems demanding our attention and energy.

"These officers will remain in India for six months. Besides the expenditure on their emoluments, travelling expenses and other allowances, the machines which will be imported in pursuance of their recommendations are bound to be foreign and very costly. At a time when we need to save national money, how is this extravagance justified?

"Moreover, contrary to what the Government expects it is more likely to produce harm than good. It will mean loss of jobs for many of our workers who are at present employed in the Postal Department. They will be reduced to begging at a time when we are facing acute unemployment. When we can have any number of men for all the work that we may have to do, how is it wise to use machines in their stead and thus swell the ranks of the unemployed?"

The use of machines and money which is spent on them for displacing men from their jobs may serve some useful purpose in those countries where the population falls short of the requirements of the work to be done; though even there it breeds the evil of capitalism, the need for foreign markets and consequent imperialism. But to employ machines in our country where numberless people are literally dying of hunger on account of unemployment is not only cruel but also foolish.

It appears from certain reports that mechanization is also intended to be introduced in the *bidi* industry. This industry provides employment to nearly 6 lakh workers.* And an additional

* These figures are taken from the A.I.C.C. 'Economic Review', May 15, 1953.

3 lakh workers get seasonal work for a couple of months every year. The Central Government collects about 11 crores of rupees as excise duty annually on the tobacco which is consumed by the *bidi* industry in the country. It is estimated that roughly 50 crore *bidis* are turned out every day. It is a cottage industry carried on in the villages, and it does not need any capital. It provides to the villagers a spare-time job for supplementing their incomes.

The industry has an investment of 60 crore rupees, and there are about 200 big factory-owners who control 75 per cent of the total industry and therefore a major portion of the profits. Now some of these big factory-owners are thinking of mechanizing the industry if a suitable machine could be devised. It will save them the trouble of employing so many persons and also bring in more profits. Two of such machines have already been produced. They are expected to manufacture ten to fifteen thousand *bidis* per day — which means they will do about the same amount of work as twelve men. Later on, when they are improved, their capacity for ousting more men from work will increase still further and the capitalists will be enabled to reap fatter profits by investing their money in machines and turning out the workers from their jobs and making them free to die of hunger.

The example serves well to illustrate the havoc which the machines and big mechanized factories are capable of working in the economic life of the country. It reveals how many of our village and cottage industries were destroyed and those which have survived are still being destroyed. The question is what we are to do about it.

When a discussion was raised about the use of these machines in the *bidi* industry, the Deputy Commerce Minister, New Delhi, assured that "the Government was fundamentally opposed to mechanization in any particular section of industry which might result in large-scale unemployment." (F.P.J., New Delhi, 14-5-'53). I think the Post and Telegraph Minister should also make a similar announcement. And the Government should declare as its settled policy that it will do all that is necessary for promoting and protecting the remaining village and home industries and take steps to start others which may be found desirable. The Government should do so because the removal of unemployment is our most important problem today. The policy which fails to tackle it will be judged as futile under present conditions.

18-6-'53

(From the original in Hindi)

JEALOUSY AND MODERN CIVILIZATION

(*By Maganbhai P. Desai*)

A friend gives the following information which is not only interesting but also very significant from the point of view of the mass psychology that is born of modern civilization. He says:

> "In a book called *We Tibetans* by a Tibetan lady called Tho Ra Ma who married a British Consul called Mr King as the first Tibetan woman to do so, she said before this war:
>
> "'We Tibetans have no motor cars or radios and we are happy for it. For if these invade the country, some will get possession of them and others will go without them and then there will be jealousy and quarrel for them. Now we have no such problems. Every beggar in Tibet can ride a horse or yak.'"

Modern civilization aims at raising the standard of living by producing as much consumer goods as possible; economic and physical sciences help it with zest and enthusiasm; but it has not till now seriously touched the problem of their proper distribution which is at present governed chiefly by the money-mechanism and values of private property.

It does not also mind, much less decide, priorities in this matter of raising the standard of living. All surely cannot do it at the same time, nor have they equal opportunities. There is, therefore, along with this race for higher standard of life, a feeling of jealousy and hatred born in the mind of the people. It becomes as if while all are called few only achieve, and the race goes on for these few as well; there is no end to it.

And this state of things has created diverse problems in social psychology and much worry and vexation in the resultant social order. Modern civilization faces this problem acutely at present.

Gandhiji solved this problem by stating his Sarvodaya doctrine that all can rise provided the last among us are minded first, i.e. raising the standard of their life *is* considered the topmost priority for the whole community. The capitalist order, i.e. an order based on money and machine economy, by its very nature, cannot accept this; and hence it almost becomes an order of perennial jealousy and hatred, devouring unsatedness and consequent neurosis, indifference to human and spiritual values, — all leading to frustration and war. Western psychological studies have not sufficiently gone into these deeper problems; it is high time they do it. At least, let us in India not merely ape the ways of the West but probe deep into and examine for ourselves the values set up by it and choose our own way of life — that of peace and Sarvodaya.

12-6-'53

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HARIJAN

July 18 1953

THE JUDICIARY AND THE EXECUTIVE

(*By Maganbhai P. Desai*)

An independent judiciary separate from the executive is one of the fundamental principles of British democracy. That these two departments of the State should be separate does not of course mean that there should not be any co-operation and harmony in their work; because they exist in a State so that both together might collaborate for the welfare of the community. However, in a democracy to fulfil their respective functions properly, it is felt necessary that the judiciary must be independent and the executive should no way control it, though both should work in harmony and co-operation in the larger interests of the community.

Though the English believed in such freedom for the judiciary, they did not adopt it fully in the governance of their Indian Empire. It was easy to rule a foreign land that way; the White could have an upper hand thereby; and whenever it was so needed, the executive had great facility to set aside dictates of justice in favour of the preservation of foreign rule.

That this was a bad thing was known to our national leaders long ago. Since the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885 we find that it continuously resolved that the judiciary and the executive must be separated. But how could a foreign government undertake a reform that would undermine its foundations?

Now foreign rule is no more, and we have our own Constitution. Therefore, there is contained in it a Directive (Sec. 50) that "the State shall take steps to separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the State." It is a matter of joy that the Government of Bombay is first to implement this Directive, for which it deserves congratulations. On the first of this month it was announced that the executive and the judiciary will be separate in the State henceforth. This has demonstrated that the State Government believes in democracy, and it has now opened the doors for the judiciary and the executive to develop on sound democratic lines.

This change has laid a very great responsibility on the two departments of the State. They have now to get out of their old habit formed during the British rule and institute a truly democratic system. They will have to learn to work in harmony and co-operation, for the common object of the good of the community; because, ultimately they are for it. The judiciary which was till now under the executive, should not fly away with its newly acquired freedom; similarly the executive, habituated as it was to work by suppressing the judiciary, will remember that it has to be free from that bad habit. Otherwise they will quarrel among themselves instead of collaborating for their common objective of the people's good.

The Chief Minister, broadcasting from the A. I. R., Bombay, on the commencement of this great change, said:

> "I trust that this reform will be understood and accepted in its true spirit. Our Constitution while insisting upon the independence of the judiciary, has not accepted the extreme form of the doctrine of separation of powers and has rejected the outmoded political philosophy of checks and balances which is implied in certain constitutions. Separation is a hard word. A Welfare State cannot be run by separation but only by co-operation in the three grand departments of State, the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, all working not only for liberty but also for social and economic justice and equality of status and opportunity....We are not to think of the legislators but of the Legislature, not of Ministers but of the Executive, not of Judges but of the Judicature. These are the three great continuous bodies which must be abstracted from all transitory individuals who may happen to hold their power. In making, administering and also in interpreting laws, essentially they must all be guided by popular will within the framework of the Constitution which the people have given to themselves. Fusion of functions may be bad, but confusion of powers would be worse. I need not, therefore, emphasize that the separation of functions does not mean cutting the lines of connection; but on the other hand strengthening them for the common purpose of serving the people."

On this great occasion the Judges of the High Court, Bombay, invited the Bombay Ministers to dinner; speaking on this occasion the Chief Justice congratulated the Chief Minister for the reform and felicitated him personally for demonstrating his faith in democracy thereby. And regarding the judiciary, which will henceforth be under his complete control, he observed that it was also for the people's welfare and was equally interested in the ideal of a Welfare State. And he added that a judge like others was also an erring human being; but his post — the seat of justice was important and worthy of respect, and only if he can work freely could he give the benefit of the rule of law to the people of a democratic State.

During the days when the news of this good beginning were appearing in the Press, we had another piece of news that the Chief Justice, in disposing an appeal from a district court, said that the judges and magistrates were not concerned with the policy of the Government and that their sole function was to enforce law as it was. The facts of the appeal as can be gathered from the Press are that a person was punished with 3 months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs 500 for being found drunk. He appealed to the Sessions Court who confirming the sentence remarked that the prohibition policy had advanced and the accused was therefore not shown mercy under Sec. 92. It was when hearing the

appeal from this that the High Court remarked as described above. And setting aside the sentence it said that leniency should be shown if there was such a provision in the Act.

There are one or two things that deserve to be noted. Firstly, prohibition is not something like a matter of Government policy or its administrative law. Like the Directive of the separation of the judiciary, prohibition is another Directive given by the Constitution of India. Therefore when the judiciary moves it does so to respect that Directive and in the service of the ideal of the Welfare State, to do which is the duty of the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature also.

Secondly, popular sentiment is very strong and keen against drink cases and illicit distillation. At such a time it is understandable and appreciable if the judiciary resorts to deterrence rather than mercy and leniency. Law does not lay down that the first crime *shall* not be punished. It is natural to consider the first crime liberally and judges have the discretion to do what they think proper. Under the present circumstances when there is a spurt of drink crime in cities and towns, it must be considered as a social malaise like black-marketing, adulteration etc. To cope with it, it is natural and necessary for the three wings of the State to collaborate as in a common and joint endeavour. It is not, as we noted above, a matter of a certain law or policy of administration that is involved here; it is the Directive of the State to its three wings, which they are enjoined to fulfil and thus achieve the idea of a Welfare State.

We congratulate the State of Bombay and its High Court as well as the Ministry on the advent of this great reform and expect that the judiciary will now be reorganized so that our people are happy under it and the drawbacks of the British system are removed. The bar must educate public opinion about these necessary reforms. The proverbial delay, expensiveness, use of foreign language in administering justice are some of its obvious drawbacks. It would be good if the independent judiciary will now move to remove them.

8-7-'53

(From the original in Gujarati)

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A DEPLORABLE DECISION

(*By Maganbhai P. Desai*)

The Executive Council of the U. P. Congress Committee, which met in Agra during the recent A.I.C.C. week there, is reported to have decided that the A.I.C.C. circular of May 30, 1953, on the language issue would not be effective so far as U. P. was concerned and the Committee's earlier decision to recognize Hindi alone as the State language would stand.

The A.I.C.C. circular referred to above emphasizes the place of Hindi and adds that regional languages also should be developed in their respective areas, and recommends that due place should be given to Urdu. As it says, "it must be thought that Urdu is a language of India, which took birth and shape in India and is spoken and written by a very considerable number of the people in the country."

In this connection, we further learn from papers that U. P. Bhasha Samiti has prepared a memorandum viewing with "great alarm" the agitation for the recognition of Urdu as another State language of U. P. The memorandum will be submitted to the Congress President. It declares that the move for recognition of Urdu, "instead of bringing the communities together will accentuate their differences."

It is very unfortunate indeed that people in U. P. and the North, where Urdu is also a common language of the people irrespective of class or creed, have been wrongly educated to look upon Urdu as Muslim language. It is rather this that gives the simple question of the language a communal tinge and an undesirable turn, thereby creating avoidable friction and bad blood. The Congress has always stood for a common language for India which shall be a simple form of a happy amalgam of Hindi and Urdu. This position of the Congress has been amply vindicated by the Constitution of India in its enunciation of our future language policy. Urdu along with others, viz. Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil etc. is a recognized Indian language under the Constitution (*vide* Schedule 8). To refuse such recognition to it wherever it is a spoken language — and surely it is a language of a considerable section of the U. P. — is against the Constitution and the ideology of the Congress as well. For the U. P. Congress to oppose it, therefore, is very much to be deplored. We hope wiser counsels will prevail and communal feelings which are unnecessarily provoked by such refusal will not be given a new lease by U. P.'s opposition to our sound language policy given to us by the Congress and the Father of the Nation.

11-7-'53

GANDHIAN TECHNIQUES IN THE MODERN WORLD

By Pyarelal

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NEED FOR REAL WORKERS *

I had come to this district (Daltonganj) and toured some of its villages six months ago. There has been a big change in the atmosphere of the country during these six months. When I came here first I talked of collecting hardly ten to twelve thousand acres from a district. But, as you know, we are now talking of collecting lakhs of acres. The Bihar Congress, in its first resolution, had decided to collect only four lakh acres. They have now raised the target to 32 lakh acres. The people have come to have very great expectations from this movement and in turn we have also increased our demand from the people. More and more workers are forthcoming to help us in our task. Almost every political party in the country has expressed its sympathy and wished success to our endeavour. Doubts are still raised now and then; they are necessary and useful too in their own way, because doubts help to clarify and correct the views we and they have about this work. But all are agreed that the Bhoodan Movement will do nothing but good to the country. To some its progress appears to be slow. There may also be difference of opinion about its capacity to bring about a full revolution. But everybody accepts that the more does the movement grow, the more good will it do to the people.

Every revolution arises first in the form of an idea in the mind. The idea is then expressed in speech and made dynamic through the action of the will. It is then translated into practice. To begin with, the practice is confined to an individual; gradually it expands and is adopted by the community. Finally when it has sufficiently imprinted itself on the social consciousness, the society bestows its sanction upon it and makes it a normal part of its conduct. It is in this way that a righteous idea emanating first from the mind of an individual evolves and passes on into a *smriti*, i.e. a social injunction and a State law. And then eventually it becomes a matter of normal social behaviour. The society then comes to regard it as an unquestionably correct law of human life and pays natural allegiance to it. To take an example: Stealing is today looked down upon as a crime. Both the society in general and law are against it. But it is not the fear of law which prevents men from stealing. The fact is that the man's sense of right and wrong, his reason and conscience accept that stealing is against humanity. This is why the injunction against stealing finds place both in the religious law and the State law. It was not so in the beginning. But gradually as its ethical propriety and social utility were understood, it was assimilated into the life of the community and accepted as its permanent part.

This example will show you how the society comes to accept and act on new ethical and moral ideas. We now seek to introduce and establish another idea — that possession of land or wealth in excess of one's needs is a sin. The idea is not new. It was propounded centuries ago and the Rishis practised it. We have had many saints and Mahatmas who adopted this principle in their lives on an individual basis. But the people do not regard the accumulation of wealth with the same amount of disapproval as stealing. We have now to create this feeling among the people. This is why I have described this movement as धर्मचक्र, i.e. the spreading of the Law of Dharma. It is called धर्मचक्र because it aims at introducing an essentially religious truth in the social life of the nation on a group basis. Non-possession was thought to be an attribute appropriate for *sadhus* and *sannyasis* only. There was little appreciation of the fact that it was equally helpful to the development and progress of ordinary people. It will not be possible to put an end to exploitation unless social life is reorganized on the basis of the principle of non-possession. This we are to do now. It will begin with the transformation of people's thought and belief and end by revolutionizing the society.

The solution of land problem on which we are presently concentrating our efforts is the beginning of this social revolution. I and many other friends are touring in various parts of the country for this purpose. But I felt that we must accelerate the pace of our work and I decided that the experiment should be conducted in some selected province on a wider scale, so as to demonstrate how the problem can be fully solved through this method. I have therefore demanded 32 lakh acres from Bihar. The figure may appear big, but look at the magnitude of the problem which we are out to solve and you will understand that the demand is just modest.

Now if we succeed in convincing the people that the accumulation of wealth is wrong and are able to collect 32 lakh acres through love and non-violence, then, whether the problem is fully solved or not, at any rate, we will have cleared the path for it. We have to spread and propagate the basic principles which inspire this movement. For this we need workers who have adopted and implemented these principles in their own lives. The greater the number of the workers of this type, the more speedily will our object be achieved. The atmosphere is already imbued with the basic idea. We see how willing and eager the people are to give their land even in such a backward district as Palamu. It means that the atmosphere is charged with this thought in an unmanifest form. But the workers have to go to every village and secure gift-deeds from every peasant so as to draw it out in the manifest form.

For this we need workers of high character with strong faith in the Bhoodan mission. Our work would be said to have been successfully fulfilled only when we are able to get something from every peasant in every village as the token of his love and goodwill for this movement.

* Shri Vinoba's speech at Daltonganj.

We keep books with us for the propagation of the literature embodying our ideas. Of these I specially recommend the interested to read *Gita-Pravachan* * because the teaching of the Gita is closely connected with the ideological basis of the Bhoodan Yajna. An essentially religious idea can be preached only by a truly religious man. Bhoodan work requires the worker to be a Karma-yogi, i.e. a man who follows the yoga of works. And the Gita is the book *par excellence* for Karma-yoga. In a way everybody is doing some work. Even the beggar is engaged in the work of begging. Karma-yoga is achieved only when a man is able to work without any sense of egoism. When likes and dislikes and anger cease, when the desire for fruit no longer agitates man's mind, and when he undertakes action with perfect detachment in the spirit of duty, then only does he attain success in Karma-yoga. We need workers of this type. They should be able to dedicate themselves wholly to the Bhoodan work to the exclusion of all other things until the task is fully achieved. If we can secure even a few workers of this type I have no doubt that we can achieve what we have undertaken to do. They will act as servants to the entire humanity and will have no preference or prejudice for or against any party.

There are many young men here who are attentively listening to my speech. I hope my voice is reaching their ears and wish it will also reach their hearts. India is independent and they have now the opportunity to devote their life to the glorious task of the reconstructing our country on the basis of our old culture. India has always stood for the inculcation of noble thought and conduct among her people and to this end she has made long and continuous efforts down the centuries. Now after the attainment of Swaraj, we have before us an opportunity to serve the whole world. It is an unprecedented opportunity and we will do well to turn it to good account. I therefore ask for ideal workers with an intimate knowledge of how our people think and act, — workers who will be completely free from egoism and above the parties. They should be pure in their thought, gentle in their speech and humble of heart. They will explain to the people the significance of their work and accept willingly whatever the people may give them. There should not be any feeling of anger against those who do not give. They should rather regard the refusal to give as an invitation to come again, and go away quietly from his place, having bowed to him. If we work in this spirit with faith and humility, our speech, I am sure, cannot but be effective.

Let us then initiate our masters, the people, into the ancient and eternal truth that the spirit is not limited to a single body but dwells in all others, and, therefore, those around you are your own forms. Hence you should look not only to your welfare and of those of your family but also of the whole society. We cannot be narrow in our outlook if we want the society to live and prosper. We have to get the people realize the all-pervasive presence of the spirit. And I am sure it can be done because it is the truth. And men are really eager to share the experience of the all-pervasiveness of the spirit. That is why they marry and beget children, for it helps them to go out of the bounds of their narrow ego and partake of the larger life of the community. Without this experience of such a larger life and the all-pervasiveness of the spirit, man can never get true satisfaction.

(From Marathi)

* A collection of speeches on the Gita by Shri Vinoba available in Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati. Gujarati edition available at Navajivan, Ahmedabad-9. Price Re. 1-8-0, Postage etc. As. 9.

COLIN CLARK *vs.* MALTHUS

II

In Malthus' time, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century the rate of population growth in Great Britain and Ireland, which previously had been very slow, rose to one per cent per annum. That was not due to any increase in size of family but solely due to falling mortality. Though this increase was much less than the rate of population growth in many countries now, Malthus thought that it could not be borne, and should be somehow checked. He attracted a great deal of attention in intellectual circle, but fortunately our ancestors, on the whole, had the sense not to listen to him. What would have happened if they had ? In the first place, medical research would have been slowed down or stopped. It is curious that in the same year in which Malthus' book on population was published in 1798, Jenner announced the discovery of vaccination. Crude and dangerous as were the methods of Jenner and his contemporaries, they saved countless lives, particularly lives of children. For this reason Malthus opposed them. So obsessed was he with his theoretical Laws of Population that he stated that even if vaccination did succeed in checking deaths from small-pox, the only result would be that some other disease would shortly spring up which would leave the death-rate much where it had been before. Many modern Malthusians talk in almost exactly the same manner about the way in which modern medicine and hygiene are wiping out malaria and other endemic diseases in the orient.

If our ancestors had listened to Malthus and let him have his way and restrict population growth, whether by hindering medical research or by preventing the birth of children, have you ever considered how the whole balance of history would have been altered ? On the continued population growth of these times, hard though they were for the people then living, depended the attainment of British world supremacy in the nineteenth century, and the prominent position in world affairs which Britain still holds. On it depended the whole flow of emigrants ; without it there would have been no Australia or New Zealand, no English-speaking settlers in Canada and South Africa, and the United States would probably have remained a small, weak and undeveloped country. The Irish, atrocious as were the injustices perpetrated upon them by British parliaments, nevertheless are playing a vital role in the modern world through having contributed so much to the peopling of United States and Australia, and the wide dissemination of their faith and their culture throughout the world. If our ancestors had taken Malthus seriously there would now be very few of us and we would still be living in an unprogressive eighteenth century type of economy, probably under the domination of some great European power.

The country where Malthus' teachings did have some effect was France, which in 1798, looked like dominating the world. It was Revolutionary France which first gave to the modern world * *the idea of legalizing divorce (which had been so marked a feature of the ancient Greeco-Roman world in its declining phase.)* As the experience of so many other countries besides France also proved, the legislation of divorce was quickly followed by a decline in the family, and population growth ceased. Does not this have something to do with the fact that France is now in world affairs but a shadow of its former self haunted by the fear of nations over whom her tricolour was once borne triumphant as the banner of freedom? But let it also be added that the country which first fell into the pit also looks like being the first country to climb out of it. And following quickly in France's footsteps, there has been in the past few years a dramatic increase in size of family throughout western Europe and North America. England is now the odd man out, practically the only country which is not producing enough children to provide for a fairly rapid population increase. Is it not probable that the catastrophic decline in British influence in the world over the past thirty years is largely due to the rest of the world now knowing that our population is stationary, and is likely to remain so for many years to come, while that of other countries is rapidly increasing?

The comparatively rare occasions in history in which there have been rapid and sustained increases of population are all well worth studying. Our own, starting about 1750, was one. There was a somewhat similar case among the Japanese, whose population began to increase rapidly after the westernizing reforms of 1868, due in this case both to decrease in mortality, and to the discouragement of infanticide and abortion. The Dutch had to face the same problem much earlier, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And one perfectly clear example of rapid population among a people with only a limited area of cultivated land was among the ancient Greeks, about the seventh and sixth centuries B. C.

For each of these peoples — the Greeks, the Dutch, the English, and the Japanese the period of rapid population growth, though it undoubtedly meant economic hardship in the earlier stages, proved in the end to be not a disaster but a glorious national opportunity. Each country made the effort — and a very strenuous effort it had to be — to avert itself from an agrarian to a commercial society, emigrating, manufacturing, and exporting, buying food from the less densely populated region of the world. These periods of population expansion were also periods of great scientific, cultural or artistic achievement as well as of economic advancement. Though, each of us did, at times, go to war with our neighbours, I think it can easily be shown that both our economic and our cultural development would have proceeded more rapidly if these wars could have been avoided.

And is this not the answer for the densely populated but under-developed countries in the modern world, in the orient and in the Middle East — a programme of rapid industrialization and national development such as our own hungry ancestors undertook? If your own country cannot produce enough food, produce manufactures and exchange them for food produced in the less densely populated parts of the world. The initial stages are admittedly hard, but it is the surest solution in the long run. And certain other densely populated countries such as Italy and Japan, are already through the most difficult stages and will soon complete their development as industrial exporters.

(To be continued)

* The italics are mine. — V. G. D.

FOREIGN CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN INDIA

To

The Editor, *Harijan.*

Sir,

When I was in London in 1938 I used to attend religious sermons daily preached in Hyde Park. A Jewish gentleman who as he told me was a native of Poland daily came to Hyde Park and discussed religious subjects with Christians assembled there. At that time Hitler was oppressing the Jews in Germany following the murder of German ambassador Von Ruth by a Jew in Paris. The Christians at Hyde Park told this Jew that until and unless Jews all over the world would abandon the Jewish religion of their ancestors and adopt the Christian religion, suffering will continue to fall on the Jews. But the Jew at the Hyde Park very properly told the Christians that it is not necessary for a man for salvation of his soul to abandon the religion in which God gave him birth and embrace Christianity, for, as Christ Himself has said, the salvation of our soul depends upon giving food to the hungry and clothes to the naked poor who are as dear to God as we are. There is no salvation but in the performance of good works of charity to the utmost of our power through the whole course of our life. Similarly conversion of Indians from religion of their birth to Christianity is not needed for salvation of our soul, as Christian foreign missionaries pretend and would have Indians believe.

The above-mentioned Jew also ridiculed the dogma of the Christian Churches that the blood of Christ would wash away the guilt of sinners and said that Christ has preached the doctrine that 'as a man soweth so shall he also reap.'

The Government of India is right in forbidding proselytizing of Indians to Christianity by missionaries.

54, Wodehouse Road, Colaba, Bombay 5

Yours faithfully,
Sorabji R. Mistri

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